

ABSTRACT

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Title of diploma thesis: Treatment of schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a serious mental disease, mostly chronic. It affects about 1 % of population, first episode of the disease occurs mostly between the age of 15 and 35. It manifests itself with disorders of perception, behavior and thinking. The specific symptoms include hallucinations, delusions, disorganized speech and behavior, catatonia, disorders of attention and volition and social withdrawal. Etiopathogenesis of schizophrenia is likely affected by both genetic and environmental factors, the true cause of the disease has not been discovered yet. The goal of the treatment is to improve the patient's quality of life and prevent the occurrence of relapses. Drugs acting on the dopaminergic system are effective in the treatment of schizophrenia, where as antagonists bind to the dopamine receptors. These medicines are called antipsychotics, they are divided into two generations. The first generation is characterized by high affinity mainly for dopamine receptors, the second one in addition by binding to serotonin receptors. Each class of antipsychotics is characterized by the potential occurrence of significant adverse effects because they often affect many other receptor systems, that's why the selection of antipsychotic drugs and therapeutic strategy is not easy. Doctors must always take into account the possible side effects of antipsychotics and other used drugs and other patient's related illnesses. An essential part of the therapy is consistent communication with the patient and the family, psychotherapy or patient's participation in a variety of psychosocial programmes.